

The Evening Times Star

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ST. JOHN N. B., SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1916

TWENTY PAGES—ONE CENT

Nivelle Justifies His Choice as Commander-in-Chief

Victory On Western Front Is Complete And Crushing

As Last Act Before Assuming Duties of Commander-in-Chief, General Nivelle Wins Great Victory

Swept Aside German Lines on Front of Six Miles and Penetrated to Depth of Two Miles--News of Victory Received in Paris With Enthusiasm--British do Their Share Also--Enemy Losses Are Severe

Paris, Dec. 15--As his last act before assuming the chief command of the French armies on the western front, General Nivelle today smashed the German line east of the Meuse along a front of six miles.

The news of the victory was received in Paris with enthusiasm as a welcome relief to the gloomy tidings from Roumania. General Nivelle is the man of the hour.

His latest achievement justifies, it is felt, his choice as commander-in-chief and augurs well for the future.

The number of guns captured from the Germans in General Nivelle's victory on the Verdun as counted to the present, is eighty, according to the latest reports reaching Paris.

STORY OF THE ATTACK London, Dec. 15--The French have delivered another smashing blow on the Crown Prince's position before Verdun and taken 7,500 prisoners, two villages and several minor positions.

The attack launched after the usual artillery preparation, took place on a front of about six miles and the French penetrated to a depth of about two miles along the entire front, the operation being a complete success.

The attack started at ten o'clock this morning north of Douaumont and between the Meuse and Woerze east of Verdun. The attackers carried the villages of Vacheraville and Louvemont, the farm of Chambrettes and the fortified works of Hardaumont and Bezon-Vaux. Several heavy German guns were captured or destroyed.

For the last two days the Germans had reported heavy attacks by the French in the Verdun regions and conceded some progress, their last report today admitting advances for the French at Louvemont and Hardaumont. In the afternoon they reported the French checked at Pepper Ridge. It was not until tonight that the French mentioned the success, apparently waiting until the fighting was concluded.

BRITISH ADVANCE AT SAME TIME The British were engaged in some rather heavy fighting during some attempted trench raids north and south of the Ancre. The Teutons were defeated in an effort at Les Boeuifs and also south of St. Eloi, the enemy losses being severe. The British successfully entered German trenches south of Armentieres and east of Vierstraat.

MORE THAN A FOOT OF SNOW The snow storm, which commenced early last evening and is still raging, is the heaviest recorded so far this season.

Commencing at seven o'clock snow began to fall and continued all through the night. This was accompanied by high winds, and at eleven o'clock a regular blizzard was blowing. It reached its highest velocity at eleven o'clock and continued blowing for about an hour at a rate of thirty miles an hour.

Altogether one foot and one inch of snow fell, but owing to the wind it drifted in some places to a depth of five feet.

This morning the storm abated for a time and a slight drizzle began to fall. After in the day snow again began to fall and conditions became quite bad.

The storm for a time completely tied up street car service, and it was after eight o'clock before they were able to cope with the situation and get cars running. During the morning the weepers cleared the tracks and the cars were able to run on schedule time.

The Public Works Department had a crew of men out with plows trying to clear the sidewalks, but owing to the depth of the snow, they did not accomplish much. The streets in places were inaccessible and traffic was frequently stopped as a result. Commissioner Fisher said his men were doing all in their power to clear the sidewalks, but owing to the depth of the snow their progress was slow.

To Attend Wedding. Moncton, N. B., Dec. 16--Rev. G. W. Fisher, a former pastor of Central Methodist church, Moncton, was in the city en route to Charlottetown, P. E. I., accompanied by his eldest son, C. Fisher, of Montreal. They will attend the wedding of Rev. Mr. Fisher's youngest son, Alfred B., to Miss Hilda, of Alberton, P. E. I. The bride is a daughter of Matthew Laard. The wedding will take place on Wednesday at the home of the bride's father, Rev. Mr. Fisher, who was in Moncton from 1900 to 1908, is now a resident of Prescott, Ont.

ON INSPECTION TRIP. Lieutenant-Colonel C. J. Mersereau, of the staff at Halifax, is in the city today and will leave this evening for Fredericton, where he will inspect the 28th Kiltie Battalion. He will then proceed to Woodstock and there inspect the 6th Battery, then to Newcastle, and, on his return, will inspect the 9th Siege Battery.

Brigadier-General H. H. McLean left last evening for Montreal on military business in connection with the settling of the affairs of Valcartier camp.

WARM APPROVAL OF REDMOND'S AND LAW'S SPEECHES

London Believes They May Indicate Possibility of Settling Ancient Differences Between Irish Factions

London, Dec. 16--The morning papers comment with warm approval on Major William Redmond's plea for an understanding between the Irish factions and the reply made by A. Bonar Law, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Daily News regards the two speeches as "the most hopeful of recent times" toward a settlement of the Irish question and contends that despite failure, despite the rebellion and all the recent setbacks, the spirit of Ireland is the true spirit of Ireland in the spirit that animated John Redmond's historic words when he pledged the service of Ireland in the war.

It claims that the present situation invites a settlement. The Chronicle similarly thinks that the two speeches are a good augury for progress in the near future. It especially commends the suggestions of William Redmond that both sides mutually agree to end the annual celebrations of historical events which are among the most potent influences in perpetuating the feud between Ulster and Nationalist Ireland.

The Mail under the heading "Now is the Time" says: "So many great things have happened since the outbreak of the present war and the new government has brought about so many salutary changes that it is difficult to understand why this problem also should not be settled."

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FORT DUFFERIN HOUSE BURNED AS GALE RAGED

Structure Owned by George H. Clarke Catches Fire in Mysterious Manner and is Reduced to Ashes; Houses Adjacent Saved Only After Great Effort

Under very peculiar circumstances, a house formerly owned by George H. Clarke, at Fort Dufferin, but now reported to be owned by Montreal interests, was burned to the ground this morning about four o'clock.

The house had not been occupied since last May, and how the fire started is a mystery to the residents of contiguous districts. The alarm was sent in to the west end fire department about four o'clock, but then the fire had made good headway, and with the terrific gale then blowing, all hope of saving the structure was abandoned, and the firemen directed their efforts towards saving the adjacent buildings. The barn and other house on the same property were saved after a strenuous battle with the flames, but the fire towards the west end of the property was so intense that it was feared that the fire would spread to the west end of the property.

Two C. P. R. engines were called to the scene of the conflagration, and they assisted materially in saving the place. It was a difficult job, which presented itself to the firemen, and while the wind blew a gale the fire raged. By five o'clock the structure had been reduced to ashes.

People who live in that vicinity say that they saw the fire first on the roof of the house, but it appeared to be burning through from within, and the suggestion that the fire may have been caused by a spark from a passing engine is scouted by the residents who point out that snow was falling, keeping the roof of the building moist and, at the same time, the snow on the ground was so deep that it was impossible for a spark to have been carried from a passing engine.

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DECORATED BY KING; LATER IS REPORTED KILLED IN ACTION

Bombardier Forbes Defnez, Whose Father is in St. John, Dies of Wounds Received in France; Leslie Titus of This City Now Believed Killed in Action

That his son, Bombardier Forbes Defnez had been wounded on November 28 and died on December 5 was the information received last night by A. Defnez of Toronto (Ont.), who is in the city conducting the Pigeon sale.

Young Defnez went overseas with the first Canadian contingent and was attached to the 19th battery in France. He had served through all the heavy engagements on the western front with great distinction and only a few months ago was decorated by the king for conspicuous gallantry on the field of action. The official telegram did not state the nature of the wounds suffered by Bombardier Defnez, and intimates that he died at one of the field hospitals in France.

He was about nineteen years of age and well known in Toronto, where his father is in the commission business. It had been hoped by his many friends that he would survive the war and come home to enjoy the honors given him by a grateful country for his splendid work under fire. He is survived by a brother.

Private Leslie Titus, 122 Adelaide street, received a telegram this morning from the military authorities in Ottawa notifying him that he had received a cable from England saying that Private Leslie Titus, who had previously been reported wounded and later wounded and missing, should be reported missing and believed to be killed.

When the first telegram was received by the parents, hope was entertained that perhaps he had been wounded and then captured by the Germans and was still in their hands.

Benjamin Titus, 122 Adelaide street, received a telegram this morning from the military authorities in Ottawa notifying him that he had received a cable from England saying that Private Leslie Titus, who had previously been reported wounded and later wounded and missing, should be reported missing and believed to be killed.

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GREECE HAS UNRESERVEDLY ACCEPTED ALLIES' CONDITIONS

"Desirous of Giving Another Manifest Proof of Sincerely Friendly Sentiments Towards the Entente" But Hopes That Blockade Will Be Discontinued

Paris, Dec. 16--An official telegram announcing that Greece had accepted unreservedly the conditions of the Allies was received at the Foreign Office at midnight according to the Petit Journal.

London, Dec. 16--According to an Athens dispatch to Reuters, Greece has replied to the allies' ultimatum by saying that it accepts the demands made on it as desirous of giving another manifest proof of the sincerely friendly sentiments which have always animated it towards the Entente. The reply says that no hostile movements of troops have ever taken place or been projected, and that the transfer of material northwards will immediately cease. Orders have already been given, it is stated, regarding the movements of troops and war material and will be carried out as rapidly as possible.

In respect to the attack on British and French marines in Athens on December 1, the government declares that it desires to give every legitimate satisfaction and refers to its proposals to arbitrate. It expresses the hope that the allied powers will reconsider their decision to continue the blockade, which, it says, is straining relations and impressing public opinion. The reply concludes with a desire by the government and people of Greece for a resumption of the excellent traditional confidence which previously existed between Greece and the Entente nations.

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A CONFESSION OF WEAKNESS

Germany's Cry for Peace Prompted by Distress at Home and Trouble With Her Allies

London, Dec. 16--The Economist says it believes "Germany's cry for peace is actually a confession of internal weakness, prompted by distress at home and difficulties she is experiencing in keeping her ill-assorted team of allies together and in fighting trim."

Continuing, the Economist says: "During this year the armies of Germany and her colleagues have been handsomely beaten by the French, Russian, Italian and British. On the other hand she can claim victory over little Roumania. If Germany is ready for a peace that will satisfy the victims of her aggression and protect civilization against similar attempts to ride roughshod over international decency and justice, the smashing of Prussian militarism will be completed."

"Since it is extremely unlikely that this consummation is yet in sight, our only policy is to take all possible measures for the prosecution of the war with our confidence in the welcome given by the country to the new government, which only claims its support by promising to concentrate the energies of the country on the task of achieving victory."

Practically every unit, especially every infantry unit, has a chaplain who is on the strength holding the rank of captain. Some of the clergymen have qualified for the rank of lieutenant and others have the honorary rank of captain.

I. O. G. T. VISIT TO FAIRVILLE A score or more of the members of the Scatlet Banner Lodge, I. O. G. T., of Lorneville, paid a fraternal visit to No Surrender Lodge in Fairville last evening. Visitors from the city lodges were also in attendance. A programme was rendered, consisting of solos by John McEachern, John McCavour and Henry McEachern, recitations by Miss Ferguson, Miss Ines Boyd and H. V. Copp, and speeches by William Arbo and E. N. Stockford, G. T. Refreshments were served by the ladies of No Surrender Lodge, bringing a most enjoyable entertainment to a close.

ON INSPECTION TRIP. Lieutenant-Colonel C. J. Mersereau, of the staff at Halifax, is in the city today and will leave this evening for Fredericton, where he will inspect the 28th Kiltie Battalion. He will then proceed to Woodstock and there inspect the 6th Battery, then to Newcastle, and, on his return, will inspect the 9th Siege Battery.

Brigadier-General H. H. McLean left last evening for Montreal on military business in connection with the settling of the affairs of Valcartier camp.

Reprimanded and Released. A boy was before Magistrate Ritchie in the juvenile court this morning charged with being a member of a disorderly crowd in the North End. The court strongly reprimanded the boy and let him go with a warning.

BIRTHS AND MARRIAGES. Sixteen births, nine boys and seven girls, and six marriages have been reported to registrar John B. Jones during the week.

HIGH BOWLING SCORES ON VICTORIA ALLEYS

The following high scores (over 180), have been made since Nov. 20 on the Victoria alleys: Robinson, 148; 137, 133. Garnet, 156, 137, 132. Corey, 128. Daley, 137; Chisholm, 136; Thurston, 151; Kerr, 131; Norris, 131. Carl Chisholm, a well known local bowler, had three good strings on Wednesday, putting up 377 for his three strings. His individual strings were: 135, 119, 123.

The prize winners this week are: Monday, Needham, 120; Tuesday, Corey, 122; Wednesday, Robertson, 123; Thursday, Stevens, 177; Friday, Jenkins, 119.

NEUTRAL CRAFT SUNK

London, Dec. 16--The Danish schooner Sulo and the Swedish schooner Polander have been sunk, says a Reuters dispatch from Copenhagen. It adds that the crews were saved.

PROPERTY SOLD The property at 18 Charles street was sold this morning by Auctioneer F. L. Potts to G. H. Waterbury for the sum of \$1,625. The property was sold by Auctioneer Potts through the office of Taylor & Sweeney.

WEATHER REPORT

Issued by Authority of the Department of Marine and Fisheries, R. F. Stupart, director of meteorological service

Synopsis--The low area which was on the middle Atlantic coast yesterday, is now centered over Nova Scotia as a severe storm. The weather has continued cold in Ontario and Quebec, but has become milder in the west.

Ottawa Valley--Generally fair today, light local snow on Sunday. Clearing Tomorrow. Maritime--Strong winds and gales shifting to northwesterly and west, snow and rain. Sunday, strong westerly winds, clearing.

THE POCKET PEDDLING CASE BEFORE COURT

In the police court this morning considerable time was spent in the case against William Hillan, who was arrested on Wednesday night for lying and lurking in an alley off Union street, and also upon suspicion of supplying liquor to soldiers.

Donald Langley was called by the police. He said that he was coming down Union street on the night in question and saw Hillan in the alley.

Hillan, standing in Powers' alley in Union street. He was asked by the police "where something" with this, the soldier and defendant went up the alley. He followed and saw one of the